

THE

1477 dd 21

DUTCH Reasoner.

A

Letter from the HAGUE,

ON THE

Earl of *Chesterfield's* Embassy and *Suc-*
cess, and the *Emperor's* Death;

Wherein the late Change in our *Ministry*,
the present Views and Interests of the
Powers of *Europe*, and of the Empire
particularly; and the Strength and Weak-
ness of *France* and her Enemies, are con-
sidered in a new but natural Light.

Done from the FRENCH.



L O N D O N:

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THE
DUTCH Reasoner.

A

Letter from the *Hague*, &c.

Hague, Feb. 11, 1745.

S I R,



YOU have sent us an Ambassador Extraordinary, the most likely to answer the Views of your Court you could possibly pitch upon. His Politeness, Affability, and other amiable Qualities render him agreeable to all Ranks of our People; but his known Integrity and Love of his Country recommend him particularly to our

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Statesmen, who have look'd with a more favourable Eye than usual on your Cabinet, since the late Change in your Ministry.

We believe, and I hope we are not mistaken, that your System of Politics is alter'd, on a Supposition that the New-comers had stipulated for a Change of Measures before they would consent to share in the Administration. Nor are we less persuaded that those of the Ministry who are join'd with them, did very willingly concur in such a Preliminary, believing it conducive to the Glory of the Prince, and Interest of their Country. In a Word, we *Hollanders* look upon your present Ministry as a natural and well-connected Work, which promises Solidity and Duration.

Some of its Individuals perhaps may have different Notions as to the Forms of Government and religious Worship; but from what we can learn of their political Tenets, and let me tell you that our Informations from *England* seldom are Erroneous, they have all the same Views, with regard to *Mother-Land*, an Epithet, which, you know, we *Dutchmen*, by way of Excellence, chuse to bestow on our Native Soil.

We have ever look'd upon your Interest and our own as Inseparable, with regard to Religion and Equality of Power in
Europe :

Europe: And if our Politics have not always appear'd to you to be consistent with that blended Interest, be assured that the Variation was rather on your Side than ours. Whenever we found your Cabinet influenc'd by an Interest not truly *British*, we have altered our Measures, and probably not altogether to the Goust of the *English* Nation in General, without considering that the false Conduct of their own Superiors had occasion'd the Variation they disrelish'd.

Need I point out to you, who have so long oppos'd and condemn'd the Measures of your Cabinet, the Rectitude of our Conduct in not co-operating with its vague and fluctuating Schemes for many Years past? Whenever we can perceive the true Interest of *England* pursued by your Ministry, we never fail co-operating with them with all Willingness and Cordiality. Therefore, if we seem'd sometimes to be less Pliant and Tractable, it was because we conceiv'd your Politics to have been bias'd by some foreign Interest. And, Sir, allow me to assure you that we, on this Side the Water, extend our Reflection to the personal Character of your Ministers. Those famed for Honour, Virtue, and Probity, in private Life, seldom fail of making good Ministers; and why? but because every honest Man must love his Country and
the

the Community; that is, be a good *Patriot*, and he who is so will never approve, much less pursue Measures injurious to what he loves.

Whenever we have seen Men of this amiable Cast at the Head of your Affairs, we have willingly suffer'd ourselves to be guided by your Maxims. We have trusted to your Wisdom, and aided you with our Power. In short, we rely'd on your Conduct, and counted upon our Safety while you conducted, on a Supposition, which all considerate *Dutchmen* incline to, that he who is a good *Englishman* must be a Friend to *Holland*.

At last then, Sir, we see, or flatter ourselves we do, such Men in your present Administration as are those Friends to *Holland*, which the true Interest of their own Country directs them to be. We have scrutiniz'd the particular Characters of the Principals of your Ministry, and persuade ourselves we see so great a Fund of good Sense and Probity among them, as promises that they never can be at a Loss in distinguishing the true from the false Interest of their Country, or steadily pursuing it when they have found it.

Considering how plain the Road to right Reason is; considering how obvious the true Interest of any Country is; considering, in a Word, how much easier it is for a Man to act Honestly than Villainously,
and

and how much more Eligible, even in Point of Interest, is Integrity than Dishonesty, one would wonder how Men of Sense could turn Sycophants and Parricides. But, I know not by what Infatuation, we see daily, Men that pass for Sensible, committing such gross Errors in the Government of States, that would astonish a Man of moderate Reflection. To see them swerving constantly from the plainest Maxims in Nature, would incline one to believe that the Fault lay rather in the Heart than Head. And I fear this has been your Case in *England* for many Years. Your late *Minister* particularly was thought to have Talents equal to the Trust reposed in him; but as for his *Honesty*, if I don't care to describe it minutely, let me say, at least, that his immediate *Predecessor* and he were supposed to take the same indirect *Path* to arrive at Power in the State, and Influence in the Cabinet.

There might have been a *Bias*; nor was it unnatural there should, to a *Foreign Interest*. But it was both Imprudent and Unnatural to feed and indulge that Foible, however Natural and Prevailing with the Possessor. An honest Man, in short, a good *Englishman*, would endeavour to blunt the Edge of such an impolitic *Bias*; and must prevail by the Strength of Reason,

son, which so directly points to *Self-interest* in quitting it. Had this been done with Caution and Address, you would have seen long before now a Change of your own Measures, and of ours also, which always ought, and would have been the same, if the Interest of *England* only had been pursued.

'Tis possible some Men of weak Minds or corrupt Hearts may have imbib'd the erroneous, vulgar Notion, lately inculcated by some of your venal Writers, that our late Dilatoriness in embarking openly with *England* against *France*, was owing to the Influence of *French* Corruption. But, Sir, however Men less enlighten'd or more prejudic'd than you, may judge Unfavourably and Unequitably of our Faith and Understanding, I assure myself you do, and have always entertained other Notions of *Dutch* Probity and Steadiness. What Indications have we given that ever we would barter away Liberty for a petty execrable Bribe? What is or was there in the Power of *France* to give, that could atone for the Loss of Freedom? Sir, there is not a *Dutchman*, of any Reflection living, that could be bribed to exchange Liberty for Chains.

But need I tell you this? need I attempt exculpating the *States General* to you, who have so often, since the Emperor
Charles

Charles the 6th's death, applauded their Politics and condemn'd your own? Sure I am, you have not approved of the Conduct of your own Cabinet, and I won't doubt that your Motives of Dislike were well founded. And, Sir, if you yourself and the Majority of your People have disapprov'd of the Measures of your Cabinet, can you wonder we did not approve of them? Can you, in short, wonder we did not embark implicitly with Ministers whose Conduct we disliked, no less than we were suspicious of their Abilities, their Steadiness, and Integrity? We saw no Reason for supposing that they had the true Interest of *England* at Heart; and, as I hinted before, unless they gave Proof of being good *Englishmen*, we were very sure they would not be good *Dutchmen*.

The *Principals* of your two last Administrations were seemingly of very different Characters, but yet in the Main, they were not so unlike as the World imagin'd. They were both of them Bullies by Nature, but of different Casts. The *Knight* was a pacific, negotiating Bully, who put on big Looks, and attempted frightening all *Europe* with Treaties and Alliances, but sunk into mere Cowardice before the Steady and Resolute. His immediate Successor was a bustling, swaggering Bully, assuming an Air of Reso-

solution, threat'ning to knock any Man on the Head that should say nay, and treading on the Corns of all who stood in his Way; but in the Main, loved Blows and Bloodshed no better than the Treaty-monger. How did he Vaunt and Bounce as soon as he was invested with Power? and yet how sneakingly did he creep along afterwards? How inglorious did he misuse the Advantages which Chance gave him over the Enemy? How did he improve the Advantage at *Dettingen* the rest of that Campaign? and what Advantage did he take of the Weakness of *France* last Campaign, after the *French* march'd from *Flanders* to *Alsace*? Or what did your vast Maritime Superiority avail you in the *Mediterranean* since he held the Reins?

The Minister, like the Bird of Tempest, must love living in a Storm, or he never would disrelish the pacific Proposals made to him at *Hanau*. Had he a thousand Lives, they would be all too few to atone for so capital a Mistake. Did he consult the Balance of Power, the general Good of *Germany*, the pretended Good of his own Country, and the Peace and Happiness of Mankind, he would have closed with the Proposals of Peace offered at *Hanau*. And there must have been some secret Motive, as yet unexplored, for his Contempt of the Offers made him for putting an End to

the War. They talk'd of particular *Re-sentments*, and Views to certain Secularizations; but I am perswaded that the Prolongation of the War was more owing to some private View of the Minister's, than any peculiar Resentment of the Prince's.

There seems, in every Instance, to have been a premeditated Design of raising and extending the Storm. If the Minister had not intended an Increase of the Publick Confusion, would he have slighted the Mediation of his *Prussian* Majesty, a Prince perhaps too easily Disgusted, and not so easily Pacify'd? Had he not design'd to encrease the Alliance against the Queen of *Hungary*, would he have publish'd the 10th Article of the Treaty of *Worms* till the Moinent it should be thought proper to put it in Execution? Was it prudent to have exasperated a State, which, tho' not Powerful, might be of great Advantage to *Spain* in her Views on the *Milaneze*? A wise Man would never force a jealous People from their Neutrality. Supposing the King of *Sardinia* insisted that the Court of *Vienna* should make him a Cession of the Queen's Right to *Final*, did it follow, that the Cession ought to be publish'd as soon as made? I hope the Face of Affairs in *Italy* will soon be chang'd to the Disadvantage of *Spain*; but should it not, I am

steadfastly of Opinion that the *Genoese* will contribute not a little to the Success of that Crown. And who was it that push'd them into the Arms of *Spain* and *France*?

Some perhaps may wonder why a *Dutchman* would take upon him to censure the Conduct of an *English* Minister; but you, Sir, who are conscious that all important Mistakes in the Cabinets of either State must affect the other, will, I assure myself, readily excuse any decent Freedoms I may be oblig'd to take with your Statesmen. Their capital Errors and ours reciprocally affect both States, which gives each a tacit Right to animadvert on the Conduct of the other. Besides, as I am now accounting to you for our Conduct for the two or three last Years, I am under a Necessity of producing your late Minister in his native Light, or at least in that in which he appear'd to me. For had his Conduct been Regular and Uniform, had his Views been to the general Happiness of *Europe*, or particular Interest of his own Country, had his Measures been consistent with sound Politics; in fine, had his Heart been truly *English*, we would have embark'd with you openly in the Common Cause long before My Lord *Chesterfield* came to fix our Resolves.

But

But let us draw the Veil of Oblivion over what is past, to indulge ourselves with the Pleasure of the more pleasing Scene in View. Let us forget the Errors of your late Administration, to dwell on the Virtues of the present. I cannot say how your present leading Men are relish'd among their own Countrymen, but with us here I can assure you that we hold your Ministry in the highest Esteem. If we had not Information of the personal Merit of most of them, we should be inclin'd to judge of them by the noble Pattern you lately sent us. We could never suppose that he would associate with Men of different Principles with himself. No Temptation could induce him to draw with the Faithless and Insincere, nor to go into Measures inconsistent with the true Interest of his Country. We look'd upon him as a true *Englishman* when he was here last; nor has his long and unwearied Opposition to your two last Ministers alter'd our Opinion of him. On the contrary, his Steadiness on those Occasions has heighten'd our Esteem of his Virtue.

And here, Sir, allow me to congratulate you and your Country on the late Change of your Ministry. It was a wise, and let me add, a necessary Step, which has gain'd you the Confidence not only of this State, but of
most

most of the Powers on the Continent. You already see the good Effects of your Prudence, in the Success of your Ambassador Extraordinary. Like *Cæsar*, he no sooner came, and was seen, but he succeeded. You may reckon upon it, Sir, My Lord *Chesterfield* has obtained for you all that you expected or desired. The States concur in all your Views, and agree to all your Measures. We make one Cause of it, and are promis'd to go all your Lengths. We have agreed to the Proportion of Expence which you yourselves thought proper to assign us. We have, in short, comply'd with all you requir'd of us, except declaring War against *France* and *Spain*. And had your Cabinet reflected as coolly on this last Point as your Ambassador, we should have been dispens'd from the Uneasiness of refusing our Assent to any Part of your Proposals.

You shan't only have our Wishes with you in prosecuting the War, but our Force also both by Sea and Land, which will naturally so far draw upon us the Resentment of the House of *Bourbon*, that I expect both Branches of it will declare open War against us before Midsummer next. But in the mean Time, it can never prejudice the Common Cause that we enjoy an uninterrupted Commerce. Your

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Ambassador soon perceiv'd the Force of this Reason, and wisely acquiesced. He knew the natural Passion of us *Dutchmen* for Trade, and was too discerning and prudent not to indulge it, where the Indulgence broke not in upon the General Interest of the Allies.

We have engag'd to your Minister Plenipotentiary, and you may count upon our Sincerity, that we will join you and act *totis viribus* against the Common Enemy. And may we not do so, tho' we continue our Trade to *France* and *Spain*? You have a large Empire and a fertile Soil, and may therefore be the less solicitous concerning Trade; but we that have scarce any native Products, should we neglect it, we are undone. This Consideration will always have Weight in our Deliberations; nor ought our Friends to wish it otherwise, since without Trade we should be as inoffensive and useless as our Sister States of *Venice* and *Genoa*.

What I have said about Trade should not induce you to think, that it was the Consideration of our commercial Interest which hindered us to act in Concert with you since the Death of the last Male of the House of *Austria*. No, Sir, it was solely the bad Conduct of your Ministers, and our bad Opinion of them, that determined

us into Supineness and Inaction. Trade is always dear to a *Dutchman*, but Freedom is much dearer to him. And we judg'd that this dearer and more valuable Jewel would be endanger'd more by embarking with the *Rash* and *Insincere*, than by continuing Neuters.

You see how willingly we come into your Measures when you change yours; you see we can risk our Trade to embark with you, when we conceive a good Opinion of the Integrity and Capacity of your Ministers. From your present Statesmen we expect a Conduct founded in Wisdom, Truth, and Resolution. With such, a State may safely co-operate. And you may perceive that we think so, by the present Alacrity and Chearfulness with which we go all the essential Lengths you yourselves would have us.

We expect soon to feel all the Weight of *French* Resentment for the Step we have taken; but if you continue as firm and sincere as we promise ourselves your Ministry will, we shall be able to take severe Revenge for any Insult offered by *France*.

I can't help thinking that there is Luck in Negotiation, and that some Negotiators are more lucky than others, with equal Merit. But be that as it will, 'tis certain that

that the critical Death of the Emperor was not inauspicious to Lord *Chesterfield's* Negotiation, tho' many were of a contrary Opinion, here and very probably there too.

I shall not altogether adhere to what common Fame reported, of the late Emperor's Resolution to quit the Alliance of *France*, tho' I may not think the Many-tongued Messenger in the Wrong. But on a Supposition of that Prince's firm Adherence to his Allies, his Death methinks should quicken the Pace of all who would oppose the despotic Views of *France*. *Charles VII.* was distemper'd and in the decline of Age, and consequently if he had not already, he would soon be tired of the War. Men in his Condition naturally love Ease, and however ardent their Ambition, it necessarily subsides to make way for Content and Repose; so that if the late Emperor had lived many Months longer, there is scarce a doubt that he would have given Peace to his Country, whether *France* would or no.

But ought we not to consider the Son in a quite different Light? Youth is commonly, if not always, aspiring and ambitious, a Lover of the Bustle and Parade of War and of Glory, and vain of great Alliances and the Pomp and Pageantry that attend them. Can it be said that this Portrait of
 C Youth

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Youth does not resemble the present young
Elector of *Bavaria*? He is a Prince, 'tis
true, of great Hopes and Endowments of
Mind; but is he not young? Is he not just
stepping into Manhood? Is he not of that
Age when Princes would willingly distin-
guish themselves from the Rest of their
Species, and do something for Fame to
trumpet to the Public? He has already
confirmed my Opinion of him, and his
assuming the Title of Arch-Duke of *Austria*
gives me no stronger an *Idea* of his Ambition
than I had before.

France is too subtil not to see, and too
wise not to seize the Opportunity which
that young Prince's Fire and Youth affords
her. She has embraced and improved it.
She has renew'd her Engagements with his
House, and offer'd more alluring Concessi-
ons. She feeds at once the young Prince's
Ambition; and the Avarice of his Creatures
and Counsellors. We suppose she has gain'd
him; nay, we have Proof that she has, by
his assuming the Title of Arch-Duke of
Austria.

All the big destructive Schemes of that
rapacious Court must dwindle to nothing;
had she not found means to sooth the Va-
nity of the young Heir of *Bavaria*. But
the Case is now quite otherwise; by his
Means she supports her Interest and keeps
up

up the Flame of Discord and War in the Empire. And with half the Expence she would be at to defend herself against the *Austrians*, either in *Flanders* or elsewhere, she will cut them out Work at Home by means of the youthful Elector. Besides, being indulged with the secret but sensible Pleasure of seeing *Germans* fall by *German* Hands, and the Empire weakened by its own Members.

These, Sir, were Considerations with our Statesmen, to guard as early as possible against the Designs of *France*; and, let me add, these were Considerations which weighed with them in their late Acquiescence to all that your Court proposed to them by the noble Plenipo. You see them, that the Emperor's Death, which was thought would impede your Ambassador's Negotiation, was the very Thing that gave it Life and Vigour.

By the Emperor's Death, a new Field opens to the Intrigues of *France* in the Empire; it gives fresh Motion to all her Machinery, and more than ever bids fair for cutting out Work for *Germans* in *Germany*. I shall explain myself more explicitly by and by; but let me say in the mean while, that this distant but gloomy Prospect did not a little contribute to facilitate Lord *Chesterfield's* Negotiation with

our State. For however agreeable that Nobleman be to us, and however favourable our Opinion be of your new Ministry, Lucre and Gain, so rever'd by Mankind, but no more so by *Dutchmen* than other Nations, would have prevailed, had not the new Turn in the Empire alarmed our Statesmen out of their ideal Notions of *French* Probity and Faith.

Hitherto our Chiefs might have thought that *France* was contented with her present Possessions, and had no other View to *Flanders* especially, than barely to cut out present Work for *England*, so as to prevent you from obstructing her Designs in the Empire. And we may be sure, that the adroit Ministers of that Crown were not wanting in their Endeavours to inculcate such Notions of the Disinterestedness of their Monarch. On this Plan, which I dare say, was pretty near that on which our Statesmen built, our Conduct for the two last Campaigns may be easily accounted for. We apprehended no Danger from what might happen in *Germany*, provided *France* got nothing there for herself; for whether the Possessions of the Heirs of *Austria* remain entire, or were sever'd to enlarge those of *Prussia* and *Bavaria*; they were still in the Empire, and possess'd by its Members; and therefore we could not see that the

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Liberties of the *Germanic* Body could be affected by any Division of those Territories which *France* could compass either by her Force or Address.

In this View, we looked upon the Motions of that Crown in *Flanders*, as of Necessity rather than Choice; nor did her attacking our Barrier Towns alter our Opinion. She had every thing to dread from the Resentment of the Princes at War with her. The Neutrality forced upon *Hanover*, and the Attack at *Dettingen*, were Motives sufficient to irritate your Prince; and as for the Provocations given by *France* to the Queen of *Hungary*, they are evident to all *Europe*.

The *French* then could do no less than secure themselves as early as they could, on that Side they were weakest. They attacked our Barrier to cover themselves from the Storm they saw gathering, but resolved to part with their Acquisitions as soon as it blew over. They gave us the strongest Assurances of the Uprightness of their Intentions, which we were the readier to believe, because we thought it their Interest to speak Truth for once, and be contented with what they had.

Perhaps I may be too easy and credulous, but can't help believing that *France* had no view to Conquest in attacking our Barrier; but whether or no I am well found-

founded in my Conjecture, 'tis plain our Statesmen were in no dread of her Ambition, or they would have supply'd their Garrisons better, and order'd their Governors to make another sort of Defence than they made. They looked upon the attacking, taking and detaining those Towns as acts of absolute Necessity; and were no less satisfied that *France* would restore them as soon as her Danger ceased, and her Dread of the Resentment of her declared Enemies abated. And they might think likewise, that the intended Attack upon *Alsace* by the *Austrians*, would secure the best of their Barrier Towns, even was the Intention of *France* not as upright as pretended, by obliging her to weaken her Force in *Flanders*.

If the Emperor had been still alive, I believe our Chiefs would scarce alter their Opinion or Plan, because, as there would be no Room for *France* to hope to gain by an Alteration of her Scheme, 'tis probable she would not alter her Intentions. But Affairs are greatly vary'd by the Death of the Head of the Empire. And we must expect that *France* will vary her Plan and alter her Intentions according to the fluctuating Course of Things. She might have no view to Acquisitions on the Side of *Flanders* the last Year, because, as Matters stood, it would be dangerous for her to draw

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draw more Enemies upon herself, considering the Power of the Queen of *Hungary*, and the Prospect of Tranquillity in the Empire. But the Death of the Emperor has dissipated her Fears concerning the Queen, who is like to have Work enough on her Hands at or near Home; as for the Tranquillity of the Empire, it seems farther off than ever.

Besides the Views of the young Elector of *Bavaria* on Part of the Succession of *Charles VI.* and the Ambition and false Glory with which *France* will be sure to inspire his youthful Breast, the Choice of a new Emperor will afford Matter enough for that intriguing Nation to work upon. Most of the Princes of the Empire were willing to lend a hand towards consolidating the jarring Interests of the Powers at variance; and would restore Peace in *Germany*, spight of the Ambition of some of their own Brethren, and the Ambition and Intrigues of the common Enemy. But a new Election destroys that pacific Plan, and makes Way for fresh Cabals, Intrigues, and Commotions.

And the more *Germany* is agitated by intestine Convulsions, the more will *France* be at Leisure to extend her Views to another Quarter. Are the Forces of the Queen of *Hungary* employed at Home, *France* is
safe

safe on the Side of *Alsace* and the *Moselle* ; and therefore may the better bend most of her Strength to gratify her Ambition on that Side she longs most to extend her Frontiers.

The Fondness of *France* to get Possession of *Flanders*, was never doubted any more by us than you ; but the Difference was, that you were sooner alarmed than we. You were frightened if but *French* Troops approach'd the Frontiers ; but we were easy unless we saw a Probability that *France* should succeed in her Views on the *Netherlands*. When we saw a Likelihood of her Hands being full elsewhere, we were in no Pain for *Flanders*.

Thus it was, that we were in no Dread of her Conquests the last Campaign. We knew she must exert her Power in her own Defence on the *Rhine* ; and when her Apprehension on that Side should cease, we doubted not, that the Age and Illness of the Emperor would dispose him to seek Quiet, and put an End to the Broils of his Country ; and we doubted not, that if Peace were restored in the Empire, it must soon follow every where else.

But now we must banish all pacific Ideas. The Election of an Emperor too surely prognosticates an ample Scene of Confusion in *Germany*, and we must be insensible not to

to see the Danger and guard against the Designs of a People that lie on the Lurch to seize upon favourable Opportunities.

We take it then for granted, that the Death of the late Emperor furnishes *France* with this favourable Juncture, and that having nothing to fear on the *Rhine*, she will bend all her Force to extend her Conquests in the *Netherlands*. And we are far from having such an Opinion of her Justice, as to believe she will restore any thing she can keep. Therefore are we now willing to join you with our utmost Efforts, not only to prevent the further Acquisitions of that Crown in *Flanders*, but to wrest those from her which she lately made. And I may say that we shan't stop there, shou'd Success attend our joint Arms.

We see, perhaps of the latest, that the *French* are a Nation not to be confided in; that their Ambition is insatiable; and that we must expect to be always kept in hot Water by them, unless their Nails be pared to the quick. And I am apt to flatter myself, that there has not been so favourable an Opportunity as the present these fifty Years past to force them out of their Strength on the Side of the *Netherlands*. This would be a Security to us; and let me say, it would be so to you. For shou'd ever *France* enlarge herself to the Sea Coast of the *Austrian Netherlands*, the World must think your Trade and Liberties in no

little. Danger from her Power and Ambition.

The Strength of *France* has been great, but it is impaired so vastly, that with all the Art and Ostentation of her Inhabitants, she finds it impossible to hide her Weakness from all *Europe*. She may and probably will make a last Effort in *Flanders* the next Campaign ; and I will suppose with *Cæsar*, that the *French* will exert the old *Gaulish* Spirit in their first Onset ; but let us stand them once, and we bid fair to clip the strutting Cock's Wings.

We are in debt, and so are you ; but *France* is much more so. Our Taxes are heavy, nor are you much less burden'd, but then we have Shoulders to bear it. We have a vast Wealth and Trade to bear us up ; whereas the *French* have exhausted their Strength, though the Weight of their Debts and Taxes hourly increases. Their Trade is already dwindled, and their Mine of Riches falls far short of ours ; as a Proof of which, see how sickly their Credit is already, whilst ours is active and vigorous. 'Tis true, their Prince may command the Wealth of his Subjects, but Tyranny itself can't oblige People to give what they have not.

As there is no Proportion between the naval Force of *France* and *Spain*, and that of *England* and *Holland*, it may naturally be suppos'd that we shall not only ruin her
Trade

Trade, but oblige her to keep great Part of her Troops to guard their own extended Coasts. And tho' she need have no considerable Army of her Natives in the Empire, because Money will answer her Purpose there better than her Troops, yet an Army she must have in *Germany*, was it but to countenance her Schemes and keep her Allies steady. She must likewise join some of her Troops to those of *Spain*, to gratify her Catholic Majesty on the Side of *Italy*, or that Lady may give *France* the Slip, and find her Account in trusting to the Generosity of your Nation.

So that notwithstanding the Power of that Crown, I don't suppose she will be able to bring above a hundred thousand Men into the Field in *Flanders*, where she may be imagin'd to exert herself most and make her boldest Pushes. And considering the greater bodily Strength and Goodness of your Troops and ours, I think we may hope for Success against an Army, tho' exceeding in Numbers, yet far inferior in Strength, being composed chiefly of Boys and Striplings.

You will perhaps say, that my Note is much chang'd of late. I confess it is so; but for your Comfort, I can assure you, that the Change in me is no greater than in the Rest of my Countrymen; and particularly in our Chiefs. The Prospect before us is more lowering and gloomy than it

was before the Death of the *Emperor* ; at least it appears so to us on this Side the Water. We see all *Europe*, and the Empire particularly like to be in Flames ; and we fear that *France* will improve the Opportunity and make her Advantage of the Conflagration. She delights in the Calamities of her Neighbours, and never fails attempting to make her Markets while others are employ'd to put out the Fire at their Doors.

You may not think it, but we have been at a vast Charge of late in Subsidies, Augmentations, and many other incidental Articles of extraordinary Expence. And we are at last become wise enough to ask ourselves, *quo bono* ? The *French* have amused us, seized upon our Frontier, and smiled upon us while they aim'd at the Heart. And we suffer'd all this, tho' we were sensible of her Cunning and had put ourselves to the Expence of arming. But we are at last rouz'd from the Stupor we have been seiz'd with, and see that with a little more Expence, and much more Resolution, we might not only have prevented her Conquest of four of our Barrier Towns, but had a good Chance of adding to them at her Expence.

We were frighten'd for our Trade, which must suffer by an open Rupture ; we were loath to add to our Debts and Taxes ; we were afraid, in short, to begin a War, which

our Fears suggested to us would be of long Duration and unsuccessful. But we are recover'd from the Panic which seiz'd us; and our Recovery, in great Measure, is owing to the late Change in your Ministry; and I scruple not to add, to the Choice you made of an Ambassador extraordinary. His sound Reasoning and Address, and particularly his Character of Honour and Probity, contributed to our Cure.

We saw you pursuing Measures injurious to both yourselves and us. We saw you pursuing an Interest that was neither *English* nor *Dutch*. We saw, in fine, your Politics such as deterr'd us to embark with you in a War against so powerful an Enemy as *France*. But we are cured of our Jealousies of your Probity and Steadiness, from our good Opinion of your new Directors.

We see *France* now in the same Light in which your new Ministry seem to view her. She does not appear to us a meer Bugbear, nor yet so terrible as to damp our Spirits. We believe her powerful, but not omnipotent. And we begin to think that she will be in good earnest with us by and by, unless we are beforehand with her. The Juncture seems favourable to us, as your Change of Hands gives us Hopes of a thorough Change in your Measures.

And, Sir, might a Foreigner presume to interfere in your domestick Affairs, I would
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beg leave to point out the Measure which you ought to follow there at this Time, in order to give Weight to all your Measures abroad, and Success to your Arms. Tho' the late Change in your Ministry has been attended with an universal Calm in your Empire, yet expect not it will be of any long Duration, unless the People's Expectations be answered, in Part at least. They have long complain'd of many Hardships and of some Laws. I am not so versed in your Constitution as to be able to point out what Laws to repeal and what to enact. But I should think it not a very difficult Matter to give Content to a Nation that are as highly satisfy'd with the present Prince and his Royal Family, as I understand all Ranks of your People are. I shall only add on this Head, that I hope the new Ministry will prevail in obtaining Redress of every just and reasonable Complaint of their Fellow-Subjects, as the surest Means of prevailing against *France*, which is never to be humbled but by a domestic Union both there and here, and by a reciprocal Confidence between your Directors and ours.

You will excuse a Freedom flowing from Regard on one Hand and Self-Interest on the other. I wish the *English* Nation well, and sincerely so, as they are a good-natur'd, generous, and humane People; and my good Wishes for them are no less, for their
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being a Nation on whom the Safety of my own so greatly depends.

Though I believe the Strength of *France* much impair'd since the breaking out of the present Ferment, I am not so sanguine as some who will have her at her last Prayer, and at the End of all her Resources. For this Reason I should not be for despising that Crown, any more than I would suffer myself to be frightened at her Power. Either Extream would argue a Weakness in myself and be impolitic. Therefore, Sir, in my Observations of *France*, I shall treat her Strength and Weakness with an even Hand, but in the Light she appears in to most of the Intelligent in these Provinces.

A long Peace has brought great Wealth to *France*, but which the Prince will never be able to come at, because it is dispers'd chiefly amongst those who ventur'd for it; and who, from their Knowledge of other Nations and of Commerce, know how to secrete their Fortunes out of their native Country. Thus it will happen, that tho' there be a vast Treasure in ready-coin'd Bullion in *France*, (I believe no less than five or six hundred Millions of our Guilders) yet won't the King be able to come at as much of it as he will have occasion for in the Course of an expensive War. And in such case, he must necessarily have recourse to Credit, which bears over-stretching the worst of any thing in Nature.

I reckon then that in a Year or two the Court of *France* will be oblig'd to create a Paper Coin, which will so sink her Credit, that every Chest will be lock'd up from her. This will naturally enhance her Expence; because he that has neither Money nor stanch Credit to go to Market with, will pay double for all he purchases. When the Prince in *France* has Money, no Man in his Kingdom buys cheaper, nor so cheap as he, which has been pretty much the Case since the breaking out of the present War. But when he comes to have neither Money nor Credit, as naturally will be his Case, if the War spreads and continues, he must pay an excessive Price for what he wants; so that his Expence will increase in proportion to his Necessities and want of Credit.

By our present Conduct, 'tis obvious that *France* will be oblig'd to break with us openly; which I should not be sorry for, tho' it should be at the Expence of an intire interdiction of Trade; because no Step she can take would so soon and effectually damp the Credit of the Court of *Versailles*. And when once a *French* King comes to stretch his Credit, he may be said to be driven to his last Shifts indeed.

To view *France* in this light, she may make some bold Pushes this Year and perhaps the next, but they won't be unlike the Struggles of one in a raging Fever.

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The more violently he puts himself in Motion, the more he increases the Disease, and the sooner he makes his Exit. 'Tis likely that the *French* Ministers, being no less sensible of the sickly Condition of their Country than we are, will now exert the utmost Efforts of their Prince's Power, in hopes, that either by the Mistakes or Unpreparedness of his Enemies, some early Conquest may be made which may be a Security to their Barrier. But if we, by which I mean *England* and *Holland* and their Allies, are not much wanting to ourselves, we shall be able to bear up against any such early and rapid Exertion of Power; and if we do, *France* will be soon brought to be on the *Defensive*, a Situation she behaves worse in than any other.

I am sensible that the common Opinion is against mine with regard to *France*, when on the *Defensive*. *France*, they say, is invincible at home; and to attack her in *Flanders*, is the same as to take the Lord of the Herd by the Horns: 'Tis attacking her where she is strongest. This is a Strain of Reasoning I could never bring myself to approve, being satisfied that in private Life, the Man who assaults has the Advantage of him who is on the Defensive. The Resolution of the latter as surely decreases in proportion to the Vigour of the Attack made upon him, as it rises with the first, whose Courage keeps pace with his Hopes of Success. E Be-

Besides, have I not History and the Experience of the present Century on my side? Have I not the Experience of this present War in the Empire to warrant my Assertion? The *French*, in all Ages, have gain'd no Reputation in Arms when reduced to be on the Defensive, which I should hope will be their Case very soon, if we exert our natural Superiority of Strength, and act with Circumspection.

Then as for the Strength of this *Gallie* Bull, we will suppose him strongest on the Side of *Flanders*; and 'tis for that very Reason that I think our most vigorous Attack should be on that Side. If you seize a Bull by the Horns, and have a necessary Portion of Strength and Vigour to keep your hold, you are sure to overcome him; but attack him any where else, you may wound and maim him, but never can thoroughly reduce him while he has the Use of his Horns.

But there is another Consideration why our greatest Efforts should be in *Flanders*. Every Acquisition we make on that Side is a real Addition to our Strength and to the Common Cause; and every Inch we lose there is the same as a Wound in the noble Parts. *France* is no Stranger to our Dread of her on that Side, nor to the Advantages resulting from her Acquisitions in that tenderest Part. Therefore we may reckon she will employ the most of her Force in *Flanders*;
for

for which Reason we should employ most of ours to repel her there.

We have considered the present Weakness of *France* within herself, let us now extend our View to her Allies. Those who appear as yet, except the Kings of *Spain* and *Prussia*, are a heavy Burden upon her. The young Elector of *Bavaria* is no less Chargeable to her than his Father; and as for any other Allies, either open or secret, she may have in the Empire, they are infinitely more Expensive than Useful. *Spain* is of no other Use to *France* than the keeping so much of the *Austrian* Force employ'd in *Italy*, which might otherwise be employ'd against her on the *Rhine* or elsewhere. For, as to the King of *Sardinia*, unless *Spain* has provok'd or rather oblig'd him to declare, he would have sat down contentedly to look on without taking Part with either.

Prussia then, appears to be the only useful Ally *France* seems to have: 'Tis true, that *France* would make no Figure in *Germany*, at this Time, without the Alliance of *Prussia*. While she had the supreme Head of the Empire with her, she might reckon at least that the *Germanic* Body, tho' it might not act for her, yet might be Passive, and not act against an Ally of the Emperor's. But the Case is chang'd by the Death of that Prince. And for that Reason the Alliance of *Prussia* is become the more useful and necessary.

Princes seldom mistake their own Interest, or slip Opportunities. They have the Byes of all their Ministry to see for them, and the Wisdom of their Council to guide them. We must suppose then that his *Prussian* Majesty knows of what Import he is to *France*, and will make her pay accordingly. And therefore to view the Alliance of *Prussia* in the Light of Expence, 'tis a Doubt whether *France* can receive any Benefit from it adequate to the Burden it throws upon her.

But supposing *France*, by a Profuseness of Treasure, which will precipitate her want of Credit, and consequently her Ruin, should be able to keep *Prussia* steady, he is no Match for the Courts of *Vienna* and *Dresden*. His Situation would be an Obstruction, had he really Power, which he wants. So that unless *France* keep a very large Body of her native Troops in *Germany* to support her other Allies, and keep them firm, the Queen of *Hungary* and Elector of *Saxony* will soon reduce both *Prussia* and *Bavaria* to quit her Alliance. And by keeping such a great Part of her Force in the Empire, she will be the less able to obstruct our Designs upon her in *Flanders*.

I don't see any Dread we should conceive of *Prussia*, supposing *France* should exhaust her Treasures to keep him a Party in her Quarrels during the Continuance of the War.

War. He may, 'tis true, divert part of the *Austrian* Force; but with an Augmentation of Subsidy from us, I make no Doubt but Prince *Charles* of *Lorrain* would be soon in condition to pay a second Visit to *Alsace*.

But why shall we suppose that a Prince of the King of *Prussia*'s Sagacity will continue long in Error? Whatever Views he might have had during the Life of the late Emperor, he can have none at present that can compensate for the Risk he runs in adhering to *France*. The Situation of his Territories subjects him to Attacks from many Quarters at once. His Countries lie open to *Saxony*, *Hanover*, and to our Provinces, besides the moral Certainty of losing *Silesia* and being invaded from thence by the most formidable Power in the Empire.

I conclude therefore, that if we can't lure *Prussia* into our Views, we shall at least soon see him wean'd from his Alliance with *France*. There is in Nature but one Motive which can possibly induce him to hazard the Prolongation of making his Peace and declaring himself Neuter. And yet I can scarce believe his Ambition would so far hurry him as to forget his own immediate Interest, supposing him more indifferent to that of his Country than he ought to be. You will soon conjecture, that I mean a View to the Imperial Diadem,

dem, which so many of our Speculatists impute to that Prince. But let me wave this Point at present to pursue the Subject of the Strength of *France* by her Allies, either Actual or Expectative. The Views of *Prussia* on the Imperial Throne, shall be considered when we come to its present Vacancy and the approaching Election.

Besides *Spain*, *Prussia* and *Bavaria*, the King of the two *Sicilies* is the only Power that we are sure would join the *French*. As for the *Genoese*, however ill-us'd they have been by the Treaty of *Worms*, they are more prudent than to provoke the Maritime Powers, who have it so much in their Power to take down their Pride in the Destruction of their Capital. The same may be said in regard to the Son of *Spain*, who, had he Power, as he has not any more than the *Genoese*, would hardly venture being Dethron'd or Poniarded by his *Neapolitan* Subjects, for having provoked the Destruction of their Capital.

I will admit that *Spain* is an Ally that adds to the Weight of *France* in the Scale of Power, unless you and we, by means of our Naval Force, shall keep this useful Ally in Want and Indigence. *Spain* has infinite Resources, but they are distant from her; and, if we are not unpardonably Negligent, we may cut off her Communication

cation with her *Indies* during the War. Without Treasures from *Mexico* and *Peru*, *Spain* will make no great Figure in the War; and whatever will be her Efforts, they will be constantly directed to *Italy*, where she must bury her Treasures to no Purpose while we command the *Mediterranean*.

Denmark would be of little Use to *France*, considering his Situation and our Power by Sea, even would he declare in favour of *France*, of which there is not the least Probability. There is no doubt that the *Dane* will be Neuter any more than that he will lett out his Troops to the best Bidder. And should *France* out-bid us, which is not very likely, the Troops of *Denmark* would not be of any great Use to her, inasmuch as we could always impede their joining the Forces of *France*; or if join'd, might prevent the recruiting from their own Country.

As for *Sweden*, we may look upon her at present as influenc'd by the Politics of *Russia*; and for this Reason, how inclin'd soever the *Swedes* may be to recover some of their late *German* Dominions, by means of an Alliance with *France*, the Court of *Petersburg* will never permit them to raise the Flames of War in the North to the Prejudice of the House of *Russia*, which it will always be the Interest of *Austria* to see Powerful and Flourishing, being the
only

only Second she can have against her formidable Neighbour the *Turk*. And therefore I doubt not, if there should be Occasion, that the Northern Empress would openly espouse the Queen of *Hungary's* Interest. We may impute her late Inactivity in regard to the Broils of *Germany*, partly to the unsettled State of her own domestic Affairs, and partly to the good Fortune of her *Hungarian* Majesty, who seem'd an Over-match for her Enemies. But should the War spread, and become less successful to the Court of *Vienna*, 'tis not to be doubted but that the *Austrian* Interest will be supported by *Russia*.

Besides this unfavourable Portraiture of *France*, she may be considered like a Man that had exhausted much of his Strength by an over Violence of Exercise. She has had but a very short Breathing-time since the Death of the late King of *Poland*. The Election of *Stanislaus*, and her Wars in *Italy* in Consequence of her Quarrel with the late Emperor, *Charles VI.* stood her in an immense Treasure; and her Expence since the Death of that Prince, would be felt by her for half a Century, even was she to enjoy Peace all that Interval of Time.

But her Loss of her best Officers and Veteran Troops, exceeds, if possible, that of Treasure. I can't brag much of the present Generation of Officers all over *Europe*; but I think

think I may conclude that bad as they are elsewhere, they are worse in *France*: For I can't recollect one Officer of Reputation among the *French*. 'Tis true, most of yours and our old Soldiers are dead, but our Ally of *Hungary* has her *Conegsegs*, *Traun's*, and *Wallis's* as yet, and one of far greater Hopes, the gallant young Prince of *Lorraine*. But supposing there was an Equality with regard to Commanders, there is no disputing with us the superior Excellency of our Troops. Had not *France* lost all her Veterans in the present and late War with the House of *Austria*, her Troops would be no Match for ours (meaning those of the Alliance) supposing her Armies as numerous and well-appointed; but in the miserable Condition of her Troops, our Commanders must be infatuated if the *French* stand the Brunt of our Troops at the odds of two to one.

After this cursory Review of the Disabilities of the common Enemy, we should, in prudence, cast an Eye to the brighter Side of the Picture. A Man is best able to guard against an Enemy, when he knows his Strength; nor is it less true, that he who undervalues an Enemy puts himself in the high Road to Misfortune: *France* has far the Advantage of her Enemies, in regard to Situation and Government. She has scarce any thing to fear, but from the Sea to the *Rhine* in the lower *Palatinates*; and most of that Tract is well secured by

Fortresses. Then as to Government, she has the Advantage of all *Europe*. The Prince commands all the Wealth of his Subjects, and their Persons too; and which is more, he commands their Hearts, unless he forfeits their Love by some flagrant Acts of Tyranny or other Stretch of his Power.

The *French* Nobility are very numerous and warlike; and there is no disputing their Gallantry. Would they exert themselves, as very likely they would if they saw their King and Country press'd, their united Efforts would not only be violent and surprising, but would be setting an Example to the rest of the People. Though *France* could not vie with us in Naval Force, yet from the great Conveniency of her Ports in the Ocean and *Mediterranean*, she might be able to give us Diversion enough by Sea in spite of our Superiority: And the rather that she has the naval Force and the safe and commodious Ports of *Spain* in her Power. And should we not be able or fortunate enough to dam up the vast Resources of *Spain* from her new World, that Crown alone would be more useful to *France* in the Prosecution of a long War, than all her Allies put together.

Our Allies are needy and poor in all things but Men, who can't subsist or be useful but by the Power of Wealth. But should *Spain* be permitted to draw Home her Treasures from *America*, she would be able to support not only part of the Expence

pence, but the Credit of *France*. Nor is there aught can prevent these Consequences but our Vigilance and Success at Sea, and the ill Success of the *Spanish* Arms in *Italy*. For should *Spain* get into the Possession of the *Milanese* and keep it, she might by that Means grow formidable in *Italy*, without any Expence to her; and then she might be able to turn the whole Current of her Wealth to the immediate Service of *France*.

Spain in other Respects would be an Ally of Consequence in the Course of a durable War. By Means of *Naples* and *Sicily*, she would not only employ great part of the *Austrian* Forces in *Italy*, but contribute to the Increase of the Wealth of *France*, by laying open to the *French* the Trade of the *South Seas*.

And if we consider the other Allies of *France*, we shall find them no less useful. The young Elector of *Bavaria*, though needy and poor, yet his Situation and Rank give him Weight; and will be more useful to *France*, if she sets him up, as probably she will, a Candidate for the Imperial Throne. The Elector *Palatine* is, I am afraid, *French* by Inclination, and must be so by Motives of Interest and Self-preservation. He can't well find Security without an Alliance with *France*, to whose Power his Dominions lie so much exposed. And though this Limb of the *Germanic* Body be of no great Consequence as such simply, yet when ally'd with so great a

Power as *France*, he may be deemed an useful Ally.

I will suppose the three Spiritual Electors to be in a different Interest with *France*; but should she prevail at this very critical Juncture on the lower *Rhine*, she would put it out of their Power to be of any great use to the Allies of the Court of *Vienna*. Therefore till we see an End of the Operations of the present Winter Campaign in the Neighbourhood of *Mentz*, one can't with any Degree of Certainty pronounce the Usefulness or Unusefulness of the Mixed Electors.

To view the King of *Prussia* in the Light I have produced him, his Alliance with *France* would not be useful to that Crown, because it could not be durable. But if we consider him as a Prince resolved to risk all to prevent an Increase of the Power of the House of *Austria*, we must suppose he will religiously adhere to the late League of *Frankfort*, and of Consequence be of great Service to *France*. And should a Dread of that House, which has in Turns insulted all the Princes of the Empire, seize the King of *Prussia*, and continue upon him, I fear he would encourage the *Swedes* to attempt recovering their late Possessions in the Circle of Lower *Saxony*. And perhaps the Court of *Russia* might not care to give Umbrage to a Prince with whom it is in the strictest Amity; and particularly, when the *Russians* have so very little to fear from the *Porte*. We

We have hitherto considered the Strength and Weakness of *France* and her Allies; but ought we not likewise to consider her Superiority in Cunning and Address? Her Politics are keen and refined, and her Statesmen are no less able than faithful. Has she not her Partizans every where? They are many with us here in *Holland*; and, we are mis-informed or she has an Influence with you in *Britain*. Should she prove successful, it will increase both there and here; for good Fortune attracts as well as the Load-stone.

I don't think that the Secret Practices of *France* in our Provinces would avail her much, but am not quite so clear that they would not have much more Efficacy in your Islands. The Reason is obvious; but I am persuaded your Ministry have the Power to prevent all ill Effects of *French* Intrigue and Corruption. If your People be satisfied with their Condition, they will be united; and are they unanimous, I defy all the Art and Gold of *France* to work them up to a Rebellion, or to favour an Invasion. Your Ministers may then, with much Safety to themselves, break any Measures of *France* for disturbing the domestic Quiet of their Country, by only abrogating such few Laws as the People complain of, and enacting such as may secure them against such regal or ministerial Power as they may be apprehensive of.

Though I don't pretend to a thorough Knowledge of your Constitution, yet I think

I know so much of it as inclines me to believe that your Ministers may permit an Inlargement of the popular Power without any Danger to the Crown. And therefore must still suppose, that the most effectual Means to prevent the Designs of *France* on your domestic Tranquillity is to content your People. And should I say, that it would be the most effectual too to reduce the present Power of that ambitious, designing Crown, I don't think I should be much mistaken.

The Nature of your Constitution admits of more Freedom than ours; and by Consequence, you may indulge your People with less Danger than we can. This leads me almost necessarily to consider a Point which I have always understood differently from most of those I have argued with of your Country. It is this; that tho' both you and we are free, yet your Freedom is greater and more extensive than ours, and that by reason of your Constitution. For the Foundation of such as yours, a limited Monarchy, being firmer and broader than a Democracy; there is therefore less Danger of its being subverted. I mention this only to shew, that I would not advise the giving your People Satisfaction in their present Demands, supposing them not unreasonable, unless I thought it might be done with Safety to the Government.

And now, Sir, after we have examined *France* in her Strength and Weakness, how
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would a prudent Man judge of her? how would he consider her present Power compar'd with that of the Powers leagu'd against her? I shall be extremely glad to hear your Sentiments on the Point; and that you may oblige me with them the sooner and more willingly, I will tell you mine with the utmost Candour.

The Dangers of the present Crisis; in short, the Ruin in View, should *France* succeed in her ambitious Projects, would incline me to wish taking a fair Fall with her, before it should be said, that she put on our Chains without Resistance. But, upon the most mature Deliberation, I have weigh'd her Power and ours in the Scale of my Reason, and find we have greatly the Advantage. I have compar'd both Alliances with the greatest Nicety and Circumspection, and think that our Strength is greater and will last longer. But, Sir, had the Odds been against us, ought we not to rely on the Justice of our Cause, and the Protection of Heaven, in favour of the Innocent and Virtuous? I should be for trusting to Providence and the Chance of War, even tho' I did not think we were a Match for the Enemy. But since we have evidently the Advantage on our Side, it would be downright Frenzy not to seize Opportunity by the Fore-lock, and check the growing Power of a Neighbour, whose Motto should be *circum quærens quem deo- ret*, instead of all those vain and superbe
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Mottoes invented by *Lewis* 14th's Flatterers.

I confess that the approaching Election of an Emperor, as it furnishes *France* with a favourable Opportunity of sowing the Seeds of Jealousy, Envy, and Discord in the Empire, gives her some Advantage over us, at least on that Side. And which is still worse, though we see the Danger, I can't contrive how it can be well avoided.

As your Monarch's religious Principles, and perhaps his peculiar Esteem for the Crown he wears, leave us no Hopes that he so much as ever thought of the Imperial, we must necessarily support the Pretensions of either the Elector of *Saxony* or *Grand Duke*. And there are almost insuperable Difficulties in the Way of either of these Candidates to the Imperial Throne. By the Elevation of the *Grand Duke*, the Power of the House of *Austria* would be best preserved; and that is the very Reason why most of the Members of the *Germanic* Body would oppose him. We, that is, the Maritime Powers, might wish that ancient House establish'd in all its Power and Splendor; but the Thing is impracticable without the Concurrence of those who dread its growing great, or even remaining as powerful as it is. Let us see how it stands in regard to the other Candidate.

The Princes of the Empire, except perhaps the *Prussian*, who might see with Uneasiness a Diadem of more Lustre than his own just at his Nose, would concur in the Elec-

Election of the present King of *Poland*. For the House of *Saxony* is the best beloved of any in the Empire. But are we to suppose that that Prince would abdicate the *Polish* for the Imperial Crown? And we ought as little to suppose, that he could wear both at once. The *Poles* are too jealous a Nation to suffer it, and their present King too wise to destroy all Hopes of rendering the Crown of *Poland* hereditary in his House.

You will say, the King of *Poland* may resign his regal Crown to his Son: 'Tis true, he may, but is he sure the *Poles* will elect the Son of an Emperor, whose Power of infringing on their Liberties, they may justly dread? Besides, would not such a Step give the *Gallic* Cause new Life? Would *France* sit still, and *Stanislaus* alive, when so fair an Opportunity should offer as a new Election in *Poland*, which, probably would be supported by *Prussia*, and perhaps by *Russia* and *Sweden*, in favour of her Creature?

No Sir, the Risk would be too great; and therefore our Difficulty is the greater, that both those Princes whom we would support at the ensuing Election, are the unlikelyest to succeed. The private Interest of each of the Members of the *Germanic* Body, obstructs the Elevation of the *Grand Duke*; and the immediate Interest of the Elector of *Saxony* and his Children in regard to *Poland*, opposes any ambitious Views

he may have to be Head of the Empire. Here is the Dilemma we lie under; and I am not ashamed to own, that I can't see how we can well get over it.—But upon second Thought, I think there is one Expedient left, which if it have the Approbation of your Court, could not fail of settling the Peace of the Empire, and even that of all *Europe*.

Perhaps you may think me not so much in Earnest as the Subject requires in the Proposal I am to make of a Candidate for the Imperial Throne, since there are insurmountable Difficulties in the Way of those two just mention'd. But I sincerely own to you, that I scarce see any other Choice we can make that promises less Danger and Obstruction, or is more likely to succeed to the Inclination of the Majority of the Electors.

As I look upon Religion to be out of the Case, because no Christian System is precluded by those Constitutions of the Empire which settle the Qualifications of an Emperor, I don't see that being of the reformed Religion, should obstruct the Promotion of a Prince of that Perswasion. Therefore, whether his *Prussian* Majesty would continue or change his Tenets of Religion, I don't see any Prince more likely to answer the Views of all who wish well to *Germany* and to general Freedom, and of such particularly as would wish to see the Insolence and Power of *France* reduced.

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But you are to understand that I would have that Prince obliged to the Maritime Powers for his Elevation ; and I think it won't be deny'd that *England* and *Holland* have at this Time, Weight enough to fill the Imperial Throne. The only Difficulty they lie under, is the Choice of a proper Candidate. From what has been observed of the Obstructions in the Way of King *Augustus* and the *Grand Duke*, they are out of the Question. On whom then, except the King of *Prussia*, shall we turn our Thoughts The Empire probably would willingly cast a longing Eye on your august Monarch, but the Jewel he wears is too precious to be exchange'd for Tinsel ; and it is likely your Nation, like the *Poles*, would not relish his adding the Imperial to the Regal Crown.

In good Earnest then, whom should we confer our Favours on but a Prince that has Power, and would join us to pull down the Pride of our too aspiring Neighbour ? If we give a sufficient Guarantee to the King of *Prussia* with respect to *Silesia*, and oblige him with the Imperial Diadem, he will become as staunch an *Anti-Gaulist* as *George II.* or the Heroine of *Hungary*. The King of *Prussia* is the only Prince in *Germany*, excluding his *Britannic Majesty* and the *Grand Duke*, able to support the Grandeur and Dignity of the Imperial Crown independent of being a Pensioner to some foreign Powers.

This was the Case of the late Emperor, and must be so of all such weak needy Princes as the Elector of *Bavaria* and the *Palatine*.

The Princes of the Empire would have no such Jealousy of the House of *Brandenburgh* as they have of that of *Austria*, whose Dominion they have determin'd to shake off, having already bore it too long. And their Dread of *Prussia* would be the less, that the Court of *Vienna* is powerful enough and would be always willing to curb that of *Berlin*, should it exceed the Bounds of Moderation. And in regard to Religion, I should not doubt that the reform'd would find a Protector in his *Prussian* Majesty, whether he openly retain'd or quitted that Persuasion. Insomuch, that viewing the Election of that Prince in all Lights, I don't see any Choice we can make liable to so few Objections.

Though the Majority of the Electoral Votes seems to be on our Side, I can't but think however that the Advantage is on that of *France*, with regard to a future Election : And the Difficulties we lie under in relation to the King of *Poland* and *Grand Duke*, as suggested above, is what gives her the Ascendant. *France* will find her Account in either of the young Electors, and either will be to the Inclination of all the Empire, except the Court of *Vienna*. And should the King of *Prussia* be oblig'd to *France* for the Diadem, we would have reason to repent our not being beforehand with her.

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What I insinuate concerning the King of *Prussia* is by way of Hint thrown out for either your Reflection or Amusement, as you and your Friends on that side the Water may be disposed. Let me say, however, that the Thought employs more of our prolific Brains here than you would imagine, though it may seem that it would not be our Interest to render the King of *Prussia* more Powerful than he is. But the Question seems to me to be, not whether we should wish him more or less Powerful; but whether being Emperor would make him more Potent than he would be without that eminent Title. And I don't hesitate to own, that I think the Imperial Diadem would rather diminish than add to the Power of his *Prussian* Majesty. To mention no other Reason for the Decrease of that Prince's Power on an Encrease of his Titles, than the constant watchful Jealousy of the *Germanic* Body and of the Court of *Vienna* in particular, it might induce one to suppose, that tho' his Power to do good may be enlarged, yet that his Power to do Evil or Injustice would be curtail'd.

The principal View of *England* and *Holland* at this Time, should be to take down the Pride of their Common Enemy. And therefore all our Influence and Address should be employ'd, not to gratify this or that Prince or Court in the Election of an Em-

Emperor, but to promote the Design in View. *France* is Powerful of herself, but more so by her Alliances. The King of *Prussia* gives her more Weight in the Empire than all the rest of her Allies there; wherefore our chief Business is to strip her of that Prop as soon as we can. The Path to that Prince's Heart is plain and short. 'Tis but indulging to his Vanity and he changes Sides: And by changing he leaves *France* naked and defenceless.

You see, Sir, the Tendency of all my Reasoning and Politics. *France* is the hated Object; and should be so with all *Englishmen* and *Dutchmen*: I think the Juncture is favourable for reducing her Power; and I am for postponing every other Consideration the better to improve an Opportunity, the like of which may never offer again. If we can settle the Peace of the Empire to the good liking of the Majority of it's Members, we shall not only wean all the *Germanic Powers* from any Attachment to *France*, but have them join us to pull her down.

Therefore, the Election of an Emperor is a Matter of the utmost Consequence; and much more now, in my Opinion, than at the Demise of *Charles VI.* An Alliance against *France* will be greatly strengthen'd by including the Empire in it; and is the *Head* with us, we may securely reckon on the Friendship of the Members. But where shall

shall we seek that Head but among the Electors and Princes of the Empire ? and who among them is most likely and able to aid us against *France*, supposing the *Germanic* Body won't be persuaded to chuse the *Grand Duke*, nor the King of *Poland* persuaded to resign his regal Crown to run the Risk of being able to place it on the Head of his Son ?

These are serious Considerations in the present Crisis of Affairs ; and the more one reflects on them, the more important they seem. But are you and we steady in that one essential Point, of circumscribing the Power of *France*, we shall be able jointly, to make a Party in the Empire strong enough to raise any to the Imperial Dignity, whom we shall judge most likely to aid towards the Reducement of *France*.

Your Country, Sir, is already embarked in the glorious Cause of Liberty ; and mine must soon openly take pattern by yours. In the mean while you have our Wishes with you, and your Ambassador Extraordinary has secured you our Power. We shall attend you with all our Force, in your Journey to the desired Goal, tho' we shan't openly declare against *France* till she declares first. Let us, in this Instance, follow your own Example.

Some think it eligible to postpone the Election of an Emperor ; but I think it best to give *France* as little Time as possible for

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for practising her Arts in the Empire. For tho' you have providentially got her *Primier Schemist* into your Hands, she can never be in want of apt Engines, that makes it her Study to inveigle and corrupt. The arch Tempter has more *Belleisle's* than one among a numerous Band of Courtiers, bred up in Art, Diffimulation, and Intrigue. *Richelieu* and *Mazarin* will always have Followers in *France*. And I hope there never will be wanting a Set of *English* and *Dutch* Patriots, who will oppose their Wisdom and Virtue to the Wiles and Doubtings of *Gallic* Statesmen. I am sure you will never want such while My Lord *Gbefferfield* lives; and tho' we have not his Equal for Parts and Talents, I hope we have those among us who are no less Honest and Upright, and who loath *French* Craft and Chains no less than his Lordship.

You see, Sir, by the Length of this Epistle, my Willingness to oblige you. You would know from me how Affairs and Opinions stood with us here, since the Arrival of your Ambassador, and I have given you the best Informations I was able to collect, with the utmost Candour. If they don't contribute to your Instruction, they may to your Amusement; and I shall think my Pains amply recompenc'd, if my Letter but help to make you forget for an Hour, the afflicting Distemper that has long been your Companion. I am, &c.

F L N I S.



